Utah Program Improvement Planning System (UPIPS) EXECUTIVE SUMMARY OF REPORT SOLDIER HOLLOW CHARTER SCHOOL October 31, 2006

The attached report contains the results of the first two phases (Self-Assessment Process and On-Site Validation Visit) of the Utah Special Education Program Improvement Planning System (UPIPS). This Continuous Improvement Monitoring Process is conducted by the Utah State Office of Education (USOE) Special Education Services (SES), as required by the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act (IDEA), Part B. The process is designed to focus resources on improving results for students with disabilities through enhanced partnerships between district programs, USOE-SES, the Utah Personnel Development Center, parents, and advocates.

The first phase of this process included the completion of the Self-Assessment and the development of a Program Improvement Plan. The second phase, On-Site Validation, conducted in Soldier Hollow Charter School on October 19-20, 2006, included student record reviews, interviews with school administrators, teachers, parents, and students. Parent surveys were also mailed to a small sample of parents. Information from these data sources was shared in an exit meeting attended by staff from Soldier Hollow Charter School.

This report contains a more complete description of the process utilized to collect data and to determine strengths, areas out of compliance with the requirements of IDEA, and recommendations for improvement in each of the core IDEA areas.

Areas of Strength

The validation team found the following:

General Supervision

- Team members became more knowledgeable about student special education file content through the UPIPS process.
- Soldier Hollow Charter School developed a clearly defined referral process.
- Endorsed personnel were hired due to the growth of the school population.
- Special education staff utilize related service providers from the Pinnacle Canyon Dissemination Grant to provide evaluations, but also contract with others to provide needed services such as occupational therapy.
- School staff displayed student work throughout the school, reinforcing student accomplishments.
- Confidentiality of student records is maintained through locked cabinets, record of access, and access authorization lists on the filing cabinet.
- Recent efforts towards collaboration between special education and general education teachers were reported by school staff, parents, and students.
- Maximizing instructional resources through trained volunteers to provide assistance to all struggling students in the areas of reading.
- All students in Soldier Hollow Charter School are afforded the opportunity to participate in all offered activities
- Both principal and special education teacher are available for problem solving and feedback to both parents and students.
- Special education teacher is willing to research and try new strategies for students.
- Evidence of corrections of previously identified errors were found in student special education files.

Parent Involvement

- All parents of students with disabilities were interviewed during the self-assessment process. Parents reported: students making academic progress, teachers caring and being willing to try new ideas, students being identified and receiving assistance quickly.
- Parents report being pleased with the special education services provided for their students.
- Parents feel they are well informed and given a voice during IEP meetings.
- Parents are very involved at the school and specifically helped with the UPIPS Self-Assessment process by organizing the Steering Committee and compiling data.
- Evidence of parents receiving copies of all required documentation was present in reviewed files.
- Parents reported appreciation of special education teacher effort for their students.
- Parents are given an opportunity to provide input into evaluations and IEPs as shown by parent signatures in files and parent report.

- Parents receive IDEA 2004 updated Procedural Safeguards and report understanding their contents. Receipt of Procedural Safeguards was also documented in reviewed files.
- Parents report that their input is considered by the school members of the IEP and eligibility team.
- In the focus group, parents stated that their students are making progress in general at this school.
- Evidence of frequent, ongoing parental involvement from parent and staff report and presence of parents at school.

Free Appropriate Public Education in the Least Restrictive Environment

- Students with disabilities have access to all areas of the general curriculum; some with accommodations/modifications as determined by the IEP team.
- All students have the opportunity to participate in school related activities of their choice.
- All teachers use a differentiated instructional approach to meet the needs of all students in the general education classroom, regardless of disability.
- All students participate in U-PASS. Students with low performance receive tutoring, ongoing progress monitoring, and multi-aging groups during instruction.
- Parents and students are involved in the creation of the IEP.
- Full IEP and eligibility teams are present at all meetings.
- IEP Present Level of Academic Achievement and Functional Performance (PLAAFP) statements included how the disability affects progress in the general education curriculum.
- Students are receiving services as indicated on their IEP as documented by parent reports and classroom
 observations.
- Students with disabilities were knowledgeable about the accommodations they receive in the general
 education classroom.
- IEPs included measurable goals.
- IEP teams determine the least restrictive environment (LRE) for each student with a disability as shown by parent report, IEP documentation and classroom observation.
- During classroom observation, accommodations were provided to students consistent with IEP.
- Soldier Hollow Charter School staff utilize peer reinforcement as a positive and proactive method of encouraging appropriate behavior.
- IEPs showed evidence of the inclusion of behavior goals when appropriate.
- IEPs reviewed and revised within required timelines; all reviewed IEP were current.
- Eligibility determinations included complete evaluation summary reports documenting assessment results.

Transitions

• Soldier Hollow Charter School does not have students of transition age at this time.

Disproportionality

• Soldier Hollow had a 2005 child find count of 5 students with disabilities. Due to the small student with disabilities population size, no determination of disproportionality was made.

Areas of Systemic Noncompliance*

- ✓ Off-site data not all in compliance: child find, evaluation materials, and independent education evaluation still need to be submitted to USOE.
- ✓ Files received from other LEAs in Utah and out of state not reviewed and brought into compliance.
- ✓ Students did not meet the categorical eligibility criteria due to evaluation procedures not being followed in 60% of applicable reviewed files.
- ✓ IEP did not contain statement of when periodic progress reports would be provided to parents in 80% of reviewed files.
- ✓ Present levels of academic achievement and functional performance (PLAAFP) statements lacked baseline data in 100% of reviewed files.
- ✓ IEP lacked decision of statewide assessment participation in 60% of reviewed files.

^{*}These areas represent items where the visiting team could not locate appropriate documentation of requirements of IDEA 2004 and Utah State Special Education Rules in student records or other data sources.